

1 **Document: 640.01** (passed on Consent Calendar – 6/5/2017)
2 **Name: Special Sundays with Offerings for 2018**
3 **Author: Conference Council on Finance and Administration**
4 **CCFA Comment:**

5
6 **ACTION:**
7 The Northern Illinois Conference recommends the following Special Sundays with
8 offerings for 2018:
9

10 Special Sundays

11	General Church Offering 2018	
12	Human Relations Day	January 14, 2018
13	UMCOR Sunday	March 11, 2018
14	Native American Ministries Sunday	April 15, 2018
15	Peace with Justice Sunday	May 27, 2018
16	World Communion Sunday	October 7, 2018
17	United Methodist Student Day	November 24, 2018
18		
19	Conference Offerings 2018	
20	Scouting Ministries	Any Sunday in February or March*
21	Golden Cross	May 6, 2018
22	Volunteers in Mission	Any Sunday in July or August
23	Christian Education	September 2, 2018
24	Accessibility Sunday	November 4, 2018
25	HIV/AIDS Awareness	December 2, 2018
26	United Voices for Children	Every 5th Sunday
27		(April, July, September, December)
28		
29		

30 * This fund supports Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire, 4-H, Big Brothers and Big Sisters,
31 and Amachi programs.
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38 **Document Number: 680.01** (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)
39 **Name: Benefit Programs**
40 **Author(s): Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits**
41 **CCFA Comment:**

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43 **ACTION:**
44 The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, partnering with Wespath recommends
45 the following policies for clergy and other eligible participants enrolled in welfare, health and
46 pension benefits.
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1 **I. Health Insurance**

2 The Conference Board of Pensions recommends that the Annual Conference establish the
3 following policies and procedures for administration of the Conference Health Care Program,
4 effective January 1, 2018.

5
6 **A. Mandatory Coverage**

7 1. The following categories of employees are mandated to participate in the Annual Conference
8 health insurance program. In all cases, the spouses, and dependents (such as children) of
9 eligible employees may enroll in the health plan at the election of the participant.

Category	<i>Discipline 2016</i>
Elder in full connection (including those from another Methodist denomination and those from another conference) appointed to full-time or service to a conference local church or campus ministry	338.1, 346.1, .2, &.3
Associate member appointed to full-time service	321
Provisional Members on elder track appointed to full-time local church service	326.2
A full-time local pastor who is under Episcopal appointment to a charge located in the conference	318.1
Ordained Elder appointed to extension ministries within the connectional structure to a unit of the conference other than a General Agency	344.1, & 346.1

11
12 2. Elders appointed to disability status will be covered under the conference plan until
13 they are eligible for Medicare or for Social Security disability at the cost of the Conference
14 Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. The Conference Board of Pensions will cover the
15 full cost of those Elders appointed to disability status and covered by Medicare and
16 Supplemental Social Security disability coverage.

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20 **B. Release from Mandatory Coverage**

21 Based on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the ability for individuals to gain
22 coverage on the public exchange, churches can elect to opt out of the Wespath/NIC mandated
23 health programs (HealthFlex).

24
25 To elect this option the Churches agree to the following:

- 26 1. Agree to pay the monthly HealthCare premium established by the Conference Board of
27 Pensions.
- 28 2. Each quarter the Churches will receive a rebate of one month's premium of the
29 HealthCare premium.
- 30 3. The maximum amount the Conference Board of Pensions will provide in cash is \$900
31 per month to support clergy to engage a health carrier on the exchange plus and to pay
32 for additional personal taxes. The amount provided by the Conference is considered as
33 cash compensation only.

1 The objective of allowing Churches to opt out of HealthFlex is to provide a means to help
 2 Churches lower the cost of medical insurance and be able to maintain the full services of United
 3 Methodist clergy.

- 4
- 5 The Conference Board of Pensions can also release a clergy person from mandatory
 6 participation in HealthFlex at its discretion when:
- 7 a. The clergy person is eligible for health coverage through TRICARE, or Champus.
 - 8 b. The clergy is enrolled in coverage from a former employer or as a dependent on a
 9 spouse’s employer-provided coverage. The Conference will treat the participant as if they
 10 were enrolled in the pilot program and bill the church as explained in Section B.

11

12 **C. Local Church and Extension Ministry Coverage Options**

13 1. A local church or extension ministry may elect health insurance in the conference plan
 14 available to participants in the following categories:

15

Category	<i>Discipline 2016</i>	Billed for Active’s Premium
Ordained elder appointed to extension ministries within the connectional structure (other than a unit of the conference or general agency), within an ecumenical agency, within a GBHEM endorsed extension ministry or within a special ministry outside the connectional structure	344.1a(3), 344.1a(4), 344.1b, 344.1d	Salary Paying Unit
Ordained clergy from another denomination (other than UMC) appointed to half-time or more service to a Conference local church or a unit of the Conference	346.2, 346.3, 338.2, 346.1	Salary Paying Unit
Provisional, Associate or full clergy member granted voluntary leave of absence not to exceed 1 year	354.1 354.2	Participant
Clergy member of the Annual Conference granted Sabbatical Leave for up to one year.	352	Board of Ordained Ministry
Clergy member of the Annual Conference granted Medical leave.	357	Board of Pensions
Deacon in full connection appointed to ¾ or full-time basis in a conference local church, beyond the local church, or UMC related agencies and schools.	331.1a, 331.1b	Salary Paying Unit
A Provisional member on the Deacon track appointed to serve on a full time or ¾ time basis to an NIC congregation or to the conference.	326.1	Salary Paying Unit
75% of the Lay Employees of a local church in the conference normally scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week inclusive of a calendar year		Salary Paying Unit

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17 2. In accord with Illinois law, state recognized civil union partners of lay employees are
 18 eligible for coverage in a manner similar to spouses.

3. The option to offer coverage is made by the salary paying unit. The choice to accept the coverage shall be made by the participant. The salary paying unit may elect to offer health insurance to one or all categories of persons listed above in Section C. 1. The salary paying unit must make health insurance available to and will be billed for all persons within any specific category employed with the agency or local church.
4. Each salary paying unit must execute annually a sub-adoption agreement with the annual conference, should they desire to offer health coverage to persons in these categories.
5. These categories of persons are also eligible for coverage :

Category	Billed for Active's Premium
75% of the Lay Employees of the Annual Conference (and Districts) who normally work 30 hours per week or more	Salary Paying Unit and/or participant
Surviving spouse or dependent children enrolled in the health plan at time of a participant's death	Participant pay 25%, Salary Paying Unit (or Board of Pensions) 75%
Divorced spouse enrolled in the plan at time of divorce for 2 years or in accordance with State and Federal law or court order	Divorced Spouse

D. Retirement Health Administration -

1. Clergy persons eligible for and enrolled in the health plan or participating in the pilot program, or waived under their spouses plan at Mandatory Retirement (Discipline paragraph 358.1), Early Retirement (Discipline paragraph 358.2b), Full Retirement (Discipline Paragraph 358.2c), or Involuntary Retirement (Discipline paragraph 358.3) are eligible for health benefits in retirement through the conference plan. No clergy member retiring under the "20 year rule" (Discipline paragraph 358.2a) is eligible for retiree health coverage.
2. A clergy spouse (or surviving spouse after death of an active member) enrolled in the health plan 5 consecutive years before retirement or enrolled when first eligible for coverage (and prior to participant's retirement) is eligible for coverage after retirement. The family status of the participant cannot change during retirement, except in cases of adoption, childbirth or death. Participants electing to not participate in retirement health plan at time of retirement may not elect to enroll at a later time.
3. Upon retirement the annual conference shall establish a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) for the household in the retiree's name. Participants and their spouses who meet the retiree eligibility rules under BOB 358.2 may use the funds in the HRA to pay for medical expenses including premiums, co-pays, deductibles, dental services, medical services, coinsurance, etc. Like a savings account, the funds do not need to be expended by the end of the calendar year and balances roll forward when unused.
4. Annually, the annual conference shall deposit into each retiree's HRA an amount equal to \$100 per year of ministerial service. An additional amount of \$100 per year of service shall be deposited into the HRA account during the retired participant's spouse's lifetime. A maximum of 40 years of service is applied to this calculation.
5. Ministerial service years are determined by the Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. Only years served in the Northern Illinois Conference are considered in the HRA calculation.
6. Full Time Lay Conference employees of the annual conference with 5 continuous years of coverage before retirement will have a contribution equal to \$100 per year of service

1 to the annual conference deposited in their HRA annually. Eligibility for the HRA is
2 contingent on a participant's enrollment in Medicare B and engagement with One
3 Exchange. Enrollment and contribution schedules are established each year by the
4 Annual Conference. The Northern Illinois Conference makes no promise of future
5 contributions. This resolution establishes rates for 2018 only. Retirees and active
6 members of the plan shall not rely on prior or present benefit offerings as a commitment
7 for the future. The annual conference, at its discretion, may eliminate funding of health
8 insurance to retired persons.

- 9 7. The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits engages One Exchange to aid
10 clergy retirees aged 65 and above in selection of suitable Medicare supplement coverage
11 and to act as patient advocate when necessary. To receive the HRA benefit eligible
12 participants must enroll through the One Exchange program and be enrolled in Medicare
13 B. Clergy who retire prior to 65 and meet the eligibility rules to retire under BOD 358.2
14 will have the HRA equivalent deducted from the cost of their medical coverage until
15 they reach Medicare eligibility, enroll in Medicare B and enroll through One Exchange.
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17 **E. Active Health Administration**

- 18 1. Monthly premiums are billed to each charge or salary-paying unit at rates established by
19 the Conference Board of Pensions. Premiums are due the first of each month. Accounts
20 90 days in arrears are subject to termination as explained in the arrearage policy
21 approved by the Board and the NIC Cabinet. This policy describes the efforts that will
22 be made by the Conference office and the Cabinet to work with Churches that are more
23 than 90 days in arrears. If all efforts to receive payment or develop a payment plan have
24 been exhausted then termination of coverage may be the final option. Notification of
25 accounts in arrears will be provided to the District Superintendent, the pastor, the local
26 church PPRC chair, and the local church treasurer prior to termination.

27 Active participants seeking to enroll in the Flexible Spending Account Benefit provided by
28 the plan must enroll in November of the year preceding the year of the agreement. Inquiries
29 on billings and enrollment should be directed to the Conference Benefits Administrator,
30 LaMeise Turner, at (312) 346-9766, ext. 720.

31 Problem resolution and inquiries regarding coverage should be directed to the HealthFlex
32 Team of the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits at 1-800-851-2201.
33

34 **II. Pension Programs**

35 A. **Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP).** The General Conference established the
36 CRSP as the primary pension program for United Methodist clergy in 2004. Mandatory
37 participation is required when both 1 and 2 are met:

- 38 1. The clergy member relationship to the conference is as a:
39 a. Commissioned Members (Deacon or Elder)
40 b. Elders in Full Connection
41 c. Members of Other Conferences appointed in the Northern Illinois Conference
42 (paragraph 346.1 appointments)
43 d. Full Time Local Pastors
44 e. Deacons in Full Connection
45 f. Members of other denomination, appointed to service in an NIC local church
46 if no other pension is provided by their denomination.

- 1 2. The clergy member is under Episcopal appointment half-time or more to the
2 following service types:
 - 3 a. to local churches in the Northern Illinois Conference
 - 4 b. to the Conference (staff or Cabinet)
 - 5 c. to a Conference controlled entity (such as a campus ministry or ORM)
 - 6 d. to Incapacity leave with CPP benefits
- 7 3. In order to waive participation, a half-time or more appointed clergy member must
8 sign a waiver form at time of appointment. Please note that persons assigned, but
9 not appointed are not eligible in the program.
- 10 4. Local churches are encouraged to enroll as a plan sponsor of UMPIP and to make
11 employer contributions into the accounts of clergy appointed quarter-time.

12 **B. Clergy Retirement Security Program Billing Schedule.** Local Churches shall be billed by
13 the Annual Conference at the following rates (“plan compensation” means compensation as
14 defined by the pension plan documents and includes both cash salary plus consideration for
15 housing):

- 16 1. **Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).** The Comprehensive Protection Plan is the
17 primary death and disability benefit for enrolled clergy. The billing rate for CPP will be
18 3% of plan compensation, up to 200% of Denominational Average Compensation.
19 Appointments with compensation at less than 60% of DAC or CAC and those that were
20 considered under special arrangements will be covered and billed based on rates
21 established by UMLifeOptions.
- 22 2. **CRSP - Defined Contribution**
 - 23 a. The CRSP pension program includes a defined contribution component. Each
24 clergy member will have 2% of plan compensation deposited in an individual
25 account at the Wespath. All contributions into the account are invested and the
26 enrolled clergy member receives the appreciated value of the account upon
27 retirement.
 - 28 b. 3% of the plan compensation shall be required from each charge for the defined
29 contribution component of the CRSP.
 - 30 c. Clergy persons are encouraged to contribute 1% of their plan compensation into
31 their UMPIP account as a salary deduction. The annual conference will match
32 the first 1% of UMPIP contributions paid into the participants CRSP-DC account.
- 33 3. **CRSP - Defined Benefit program.** With the defined benefit component each enrolled
34 clergy member will receive a monthly cash benefit from the plan upon retirement. The
35 amount of the benefit is determined by the number of full-time-equivalent years in the
36 program and the denominational average compensation at the time of retirement.
37 Annual contributions made by the conference will be invested by the Wespath so that
38 the NIC obligation can be met. 10% of plan compensation is billed to each appointment
39 for the defined benefit component of CRSP. A portion of defined benefit funding
40 accrues to a reserve fund for funding future variation in market results and other
41 benefits to retirees and future retirees.

42 **C. Billing Methods.** The Annual Conference will invoice local churches monthly the 16% (3% +
43 3% + 10%) of clergy plan compensation required for support of the CRSP and CPP programs.
44

45 **D.Pre-82 Defined Benefit Past Service Rate for 2018**

46 1. The Conference Board of Pensions recommends that the annual pension rate for
47 service prior to 1982, effective January 1, 2018, be \$605 per service year, an increase of 0% from

1 2017. Surviving spouses shall be supported at the rate of 85% of participant pension benefit
2 amounts. Special grants will be provided as identified in Section F.
3

4 **E. Excludable Housing allowance for retired clergy.** In accordance with the Private Ruling
5 Letter from the Internal Revenue Service, the Northern Illinois Conference Annual Conference
6 Session reaffirms the limits to housing allowance exclusion for retired and disabled clergy
7 found in the Standing Rules, at Section IV. C. 1, which states: *Disabled clergy have the same legal*
8 *relationship to an Annual Conference as do the retired clergy and, thus, this Conference is also the*
9 *appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for disabled ordained or local pastors*
10 *who are members of this Conference.*

11 *An amount equal to 100% of the pension payments received by a retired clergy, or 100% of the disability*
12 *payments received by a disabled clergy, is designated as rental/housing allowance respectively for each*
13 *retired or disabled ordained or local pastor of The United Methodist Church who is or was a member of*
14 *the Northern Illinois Conference at the time of retirement or disability.*
15

16 **F. Special Grants**

17 1 For 2018, the conference extends Special Grants of \$13 per year of pre-82 service to
18 clergy persons and surviving spouses who are:

- 19 a. Members of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference who retired from an
20 appointment in the conference;
- 21 b. Who have at least 15 years of service prior to 1982 compensated at the Past
22 Service Rate (excludes those at the DBSM rate); and,
- 23 c. Who have less than 10 years of service to Northern Illinois Conference
24 appointments served while enrolled in the MPP program.

25 2 The Conference Board of Pensions also recommends that a special grant be made to
26 Vidal Cordova, for his three (3) years of service with this Annual Conference. We
27 recommend for the year commencing July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, a grant of \$237 per
28 year payable monthly at \$19.75.

29 3 The Conference Board of Pensions also recommends the special grant previously given
30 to Vernon L. Bell be continued for his widow, Enid. Mr. Bell died March 17, 1995. He
31 served 11 years as a full member of the Northern Illinois Conference from June 13, 1954,
32 to August 15, 1965. He took voluntary Leave of Absence from 1965 and Honorable
33 Location in 1966. The service rate at the time of his voluntary location was \$77. Thus, we
34 recommend for the year commencing July 1, 2017, to June 30 2018, a grant be paid to
35 Mrs. Bell of \$847, actuarially reduced in the same manner as if this grant was paid under
36 the Methodist Ministers Reserve Pension Fund for payments commencing after early
37 retirement date and prior to normal retirement date. Payments shall be paid monthly.

38 4 The Conference Board of Pensions also recommends that a special grant be made to
39 James W. French for his 3.5 years of service with this Annual Conference from June 1,
40 1978 through December 31, 1981. We recommend for the year commencing July 1, 2017
41 to June 30, 2018, a grant of \$140.95 monthly be paid based on the present pension rate,
42 but actuarially reduced since payments are starting prior to full retirement age.

43 **III. Group Life Insurance**

44 The Conference Board of Pensions enrolls in the UMLifeOptions program. Every eligible
45 retired clergy person will be enrolled in the plan with a benefit of \$5,000 at no cost to the
46 participant. Active clergy persons have \$10,000 in coverage at the NIC expense when an

1 application is filed during the open enrollment period. Coverage beyond this amount is at the
2 cost of the participant and will be billed directly from UMLifeOptions.
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7 **Document: 700.01 (referred to The United Methodist Foundation and the authors for
8 reconsideration in 2018)**

9 **Name: Northern Illinois Annual Conference Divestment from Fossil Fuels**

10 **Author(s): Melissa Brice & Chris Stefko, members Urban Village Church, Chicago; Irving
11 Park United Methodist Church, Chicago; Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church, Oak
12 Park; The Inclusive Collective - The University of Illinois Campus Ministry; Jessie
13 Cunningham, Northern Illinois Conference Co-Lay Leader & member St. Andrew United
14 Methodist Church, Homewood; Rev. Dr. Timothy R. Eberhart, Garrett-Evangelical
15 Theological Seminary and member First United Methodist Church, Evanston**

16 **CCFA Comment: *CCFA Comment will be coming - it will be an additional download
17 available on the Conference website no later than May 9.***
18

19 **ACTION:**

20 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall not knowingly
21 make investments in any company or entity whose core business activity involves the
22 production of petroleum, natural gas, or coal by January 1, 2018. Core business activity refers to
23 a company's primary, or central focus of activity and is an essential element in the company's
24 economic success. A "core business" is one that accounts for 10% or more of a company's
25 revenue derived from the objectionable products and/or services. In addition, the Northern
26 Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall require that the United
27 Methodist Foundation of the Northern Illinois Conference add a similar investment screen to its
28 holdings and investments, also by January 1, 2018.
29

30 **RATIONALE:**

31 The United Methodist Church has acknowledged the risks of fossil fuel dependence for
32 the last 35 years through its Energy Policy Statement in the Book of Resolutions para. 1001.
33 These risks include contributing to catastrophic climate change and endangering human health.
34 The United States ratified The Paris Agreement, whose central aim is to strengthen the global
35 response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well
36 below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the
37 temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The extraction and burning of
38 petroleum, coal and natural gas contribute to the temperature rise, thus requiring that the vast
39 majority of the world's fossil fuels be left in the ground to avoid the worst impacts of climate
40 change. The United Methodists live and serve on the front lines of extreme weather events that
41 will increase in frequency and severity with climate change. Limiting climate change requires
42 that most fossil fuel reserves stay underground. The world urgently needs a just transition to
43 sustainable energy.

44 In regards to human health, the processes and byproducts related to the extraction of
45 petroleum, coal and natural gas are damaging to the health of people who work in these
46 industries as well as those who live on or near extraction sites (i.e. increased instances of asthma

1 and cancer). Continued investment in fossil fuels undermines The United Methodist Church's
2 ministries with young people and vulnerable people.

3 The investment policy goals of The United Methodist Church as outlined in the Book of
4 Resolutions para. 4071 include investing in corporations, companies, institutions or funds
5 making a positive contribution to the realization of the goals outlined in the Social Principles
6 and the Book of Resolutions, and exclude investing in companies that violate church values.
7 The Social Principles state that climate change will bring "severe environmental, economic, and
8 social implications," which will "disproportionately affect individuals and nations least
9 responsible for the emissions." Fossil fuel free indices are becoming more readily available to
10 meet demand brought forth through the \$5.4 trillion dollar fossil fuel divestment movement.
11 The New York and Pacific Northwest Conferences have already committed to divestment and
12 the Northern Illinois Conference should contribute to the demand for a fossil free future.
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18 **Document: 700.03 (passed in plenary 6/6/2017)**

19 **Name: Election of Delegates for General Conference 2020**

20 **Authors: NIC General/Jurisdictional Conference Delegation 2016, Reconciling Ministry
21 Network, Methodist Federation for Social Action**

22 **CCFA Comment:**
23

24 **ACTION:**

25 The election of the Northern Illinois Conference lay and clergy delegates to General and
26 Jurisdictional Conference 2020 shall take place during the 2019 session of the Northern Illinois
27 Annual Conference.
28

29 **RATIONALE:**

30 Since a special session of General Conference has been proposed for the Spring of 2019, it would
31 be appropriate to wait for the outcome of that Conference to elect the next delegation, who
32 would then meet and prepare for the upcoming 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences.
33 The needs of the Northern Illinois Conference might shift, individuals' own sense of calling to
34 participate might change, and the preparatory work might unfold differently based on the
35 outcome of a Special Session. It seems to be prudent to wait to elect a new delegation until after
36 the 2016 delegation has completed their quadrennium's work.
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41 **Document: 700.04 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

42 **Name: Discontinuance of Bethany United Methodist Church of Itasca**

43 **Author(s): Rev. Darneather Murph-Heath, District Superintendent, Elgin District, UMC**

44 **CCFA Comment:**
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46 (Please note: The "Whereas/Be it resolved" format is being used for legal reasons).
47

ACTION:

1 WHEREAS the BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH located in Itasca, Du Page
2 County, Illinois was formed in (Elk Grove Village), and moved to Itasca in 1924, and has
3 witnessed to Jesus Christ and served its communities and the world for 158 years; and
4

5 WHEREAS the Bethany United Methodist Church faithfully served the community in the city of
6 Itasca and boldly risked themselves in this effort; and
7

8 WHEREAS, pursuant to the provision of Paragraph 2549.1a of *The Book of Discipline of The*
9 *United Methodist Church 2016*, the Elgin District Superintendent has recommended with the
10 approval of the District Strategy Team that the church be discontinued effective December 24,
11 2016. The Elgin District Committee on Building and Location has voted to concur with the
12 District Superintendent's recommendation to discontinue said church and the presiding Bishop
13 and the majority of the District Superintendents of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of
14 The United Methodist Church have consented to the District Superintendent's recommendation
15 to discontinue said church;
16

17 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that to minimize the risk of loss of future bequests to the
18 Conference, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference recommends that the said Church, though
19 discontinued under the Canon Law of The United Methodist Church, nevertheless be
20 maintained in perpetuity under the Illinois civil law by adopting a reincorporation thereof by
21 the Bishop under Section 46b of the Illinois Religious Corporation Act, with the incumbent
22 Conference Board of Trustees names as trustees of the Discontinued Church under the
23 procedure established by Article VII "Discontinued or Abandoned Church Reincorporation" of
24 the By-laws of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church; and
25

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the property of said Church, including, but not limited to its
27 existing and future gifts, devises, and bequests, its existing personal property and accounts and
28 its real property commonly known as 404 Walnut, Itasca, Illinois 60143-1735 and legally
29 described as follows:

30 Of Lot 4 (except the North 25.0 feet thereof) and all of the Lots 5, 6, 7, and 8 in Block 5 of
31 Clover's First Addition to Itasca, a subdivision in the Northwest quarter of Section B, Township
32 40 North, Range 11, East of the Third Principle Meridian, in DuPage County, Illinois.

33 Shall, in the discretion of the Bishop in consultation with the Cabinet, be either:

- 34 a. Retained by the reincorporated shell Illinois religious corporation referred to above
35 pending sale or other disposition; or
- 36 b. Transferred to The Board of Trustees of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The
37 United Methodist Church; and

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Northern Illinois Annual
39 Conference of The United Methodist Church be authorized and directed to provide for the care,
40 maintenance, and disposition of the said assets and shall dispose of said assets in accordance
41 with the relevant provisions of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*; and
42 that any monies or other assets received from the sale or other disposition of the assets of said
43 discontinued Church be deposited in the Closed Church Fund as directed by Section V, Part A,
44 Rule 11 of the Standing Rules of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United
45 Methodist Church; and
46

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the said Church shall be transferred to the
2 Prince of Peace United Methodist Church in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, unless any such
3 members shall inform the pastor of the transferee church otherwise; and
4

5 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the appropriate officers of The Northern Illinois Annual
6 Conference of The United Methodist Church are authorized and directed to execute on behalf of
7 the said Conference any and all such additional documents as legal counsel shall recommend to
8 effectuate the above.
9

10 **RATIONALE:**

11 After many faithful years of service, ministry and mission in the name of Jesus Christ, Bethany
12 United Methodist Church of Itasca has come to a place of transition and closure as membership
13 and attendance have declined. The congregation has expressed its desire to celebrate its past
14 ministry but to no longer remain in service as Bethany UMC of Itasca. The closure has been
15 recommended by the Elgin District Board on Buildings and Location and the District
16 Superintendent.
17

18 **Document: 700.05 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

19 **Name: Advocating for the Rights of Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation**

20 **Author(s): Paula Roderick, Member, Broadway UMC; Reconciling Ministries Network;**

21 **Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of Methodist Federation for Social Action.**

22 **CCFA Comment:**
23

24 **ACTION:**

25 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church calls upon President
26 Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to adhere to our
27 own established law, the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act, by withholding military assistance from
28 Israel due to its practices of arrest and detention of Palestinian children. NIC further calls upon
29 the U.S. to join with 194 other nations in ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights
30 of the Child. A letter to this effect will be sent to the President, Vice President, and Secretary of
31 State and will be made available for all NIC United Methodists to affirm singly or by
32 congregations. NIC further urges clergy and lay leaders to write their members of Congress to
33 express concerns regarding the treatment of Palestinian children arrested by Israeli forces in
34 Occupied Palestine and to support efforts demanding immediate protections for Palestinian
35 children held in military detention.
36

37 **RATIONALE:**

38 Israel is the only country in the world that systematically prosecutes children in military
39 courts. Each year approximately 700 children enter the Israeli military detention system. In a
40 landmark study of this system, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that ill
41 treatment in the Israeli military detention system remains "widespread, systematic, and
42 institutionalized throughout the process." The U.S. Foreign Assistance Act specifies that no
43 military assistance be given to any country that "engages in a consistent pattern of gross
44 violation of internationally recognized human rights." On at least eleven previous occasions the
45 U.S. has withheld assistance from countries based on human rights violations. Violations
46 against Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system have been well documented
47 for years, not only by the U.S. State Department but also by numerous highly respected Israeli,

1 Palestinian and international human rights organizations. See, e.g., Defence for Children
2 International – Palestine, No Way To Treat A Child, <http://nwtac.dci-palestine.org>. This vast
3 assemblage of data confirming ongoing widespread ill treatment of children in Israeli military
4 detention gives ample justification to withhold military assistance, as specified in the U.S.
5 Foreign Assistance Act.

6
7 Further, the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by every single
8 member of the United Nations except the United States. Israel has signed and ratified this
9 convention, and is thus required to adhere to its provisions regarding treatment of detained
10 children. Ratification of the Convention by the United States would bring stronger international
11 pressure on Israel to comply with the Convention’s provisions, including for the treatment of
12 children held in detention. Ratification by the U. S. also would underscore our nation’s
13 responsibility for humane treatment of all children, including the disproportionate number of
14 black and brown children held in U.S. prisons.

15
16 Discipleship requires solidarity with the vulnerable and the oppressed. Children are deserving
17 of special protections from injustice and violence.

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21
22 **Document: 700.06 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

23 **Name: Consider Investing in WESPATH Equity Social Values Plus Fund (ESVPF)**

24 **Author(s): Paula Roderick, Member, Broadway UMC; Reconciling Ministries Network,
25 Northern Illinois Conference Chapter of Methodist Federation for Social Action**

26 **CCFA Comment:**

27
28 **ACTION:**

29 The Northern Illinois Conference encourages clergy and lay employee participants in Wespath
30 funds as well as the annual conference to consider ESVPF for the portion of their accounts
31 invested in equities.

32
33 **RATIONALE:**

34 The Equity Social Values Plus Fund (ESVPF) is available for participant defined contribution
35 accounts and conference deposit accounts with Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath).
36 Wespath has developed a policy that may remove companies named by seven to ten annual
37 conferences in divestment resolutions from its ESVPF
38 (http://www.wespath.org/assets/1/7/investment_policy.pdf).

39
40 Caterpillar, Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett Packard are the subject of such resolutions and
41 have been removed from the ESVPF per Wespath’s policy.

42
43 While Wespath as a financial institution does not take a stand on the reasons conferences have
44 voted to divest from these three companies, they have responded to serve those clients by
45 providing the ESVPF.

46
47 In 2010 and 2012, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference adopted resolutions calling for

1 divestment from companies complicit in the Israeli occupation, and the 2012 legislation
2 specifically petitioned the United Methodist General Conference of 2012 to approve divestment
3 from Caterpillar, Motorola Solutions and Hewlett Packard.

4
5 Caterpillar Inc. provides military bulldozers and earth-moving equipment which are used to
6 uproot olive groves, demolish Palestinian homes, construct illegal settlements and build
7 segregated roads and the separation barrier on occupied land; Motorola Solutions provides
8 surveillance systems for illegal settlements, military bases and the separation wall as well as
9 communication devices for the Israeli military; and Hewlett Packard provides data storage for
10 settlements, manages information technology for the Israeli Navy, and provides biometric
11 monitoring of checkpoints inside the West Bank, and

12
13 For up to ten years many religious investors and ecumenical groups have asked these
14 companies to stop selling their products to the Israeli government for use in sustaining and
15 maintaining the military occupation and settlement building and they have refused
16 (https://www.kairosresponse.org/corporate_engagement_04-11.html).

17
18 The Palestinian Christian community, through the “Kairos Palestine Document,” has requested
19 the support of the wider Church in their struggle and has named divestment and boycott as
20 actions that would help them. (Kairos Palestine. “A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope
21 and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering” December 2009
22 <http://www.kairopalestine.ps/index.php/about-us/kairos-palestine-document>).

23
24
25
26
27 **Document: 700.07 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

28 **Name: On Holy Land Travel**

29 **Author(s): NIC Reconciling Ministries Network Taskforce; Northern Illinois Conference
30 Chapter of Methodist Federation for Social Action**

31 **CCFA Comment:**

32
33 **ACTION:**

34 The Northern Illinois Conference strongly urges that clergy, laity, and seminary students of the
35 NIC who are planning individual or group tours to Israel/Palestine consult with the Methodist
36 Liaison Office (MLO) in Jerusalem (admin@methodist-jer.org and encounter@methodist-jer.org)
37 to seek opportunities to meet with United Methodist missionaries living and working in the
38 region, visit United Methodist supported mission sites, worship with indigenous
39 Christian congregations and include in their tours at least one overnight stay in Bethlehem in
40 accordance with the 2016 Resolution #6031. Travelers are further urged to read the Kairos
41 Palestine Document: “A Moment of Truth: A word of faith, hope and love,” and study the
42 United Methodist Book of Resolutions with particular attention to Resolution #6111 and other
43 resolutions dealing with Palestine, settlements in the West Bank, boycotting settlement
44 products, interfaith relations, indigenous peoples, anti-Semitism, racism and human rights.

45
46 **RATIONALE:**

47 Indigenous Palestinian Christians have asked their fellow Christians around the world to meet

1 with them when visiting the Holy Land, stating: “We intend to fulfill our role to make known to
2 you the truth of our reality, receiving you as pilgrims coming to us to pray, carrying a message
3 of peace, love and reconciliation. You will know the facts and the people of this
4 land, Palestinians and Israelis alike.” (Kairos Palestine Document:
5 <http://kairopalestine.ps/index.php/about-us/kairos-palestine-document>); and
6

7 United Methodist mission personnel past and present have for many years invited United
8 Methodists to “come and see” what they have seen during their time in the Holy Land
9 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKb8SYVB8KQ>) and likewise have asked that those
10 planning individual or group tours to Israel/Palestine both “consult with the United Methodist
11 Liaison Office in Jerusalem to seek opportunities to worship with indigenous Christian
12 congregations” and “visit United Methodist supported mission sites;” (2016 United Methodist
13 *Book of Resolutions* #6031; and,
14

15 The conflict in the Holy Land has been raised repeatedly in General Conference resolutions, and
16 understanding of the issue is critical to informed discussion among United Methodist laity and
17 clergy (2016 United Methodist *Book of Resolutions* #6111).
18
19
20

21 **Document: 700.09 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

22 **Name: Pass a Fair, Balanced Illinois Budget**

23 **Authors: NIC Methodist Federation for Social Action and NIC Reconciling Ministries**

24 **Network Taskforce**

25 **CCFA Comment:**

26
27 **ACTION:**

28 The Northern Illinois Conference calls upon Governor Rauner, President of the Senate John
29 Cullerton, and Speaker of the House Michael Madigan to end the stalemate and pass a fair and
30 balanced budget for the State of Illinois. A letter to this effect will be sent to Governor Rauner,
31 Senator Cullerton and Speaker Madigan and will be made available for all Northern Illinois
32 United Methodists to affirm by sending as individuals or congregations.
33

34 **RATIONALE:**

35 Illinois has been without a budget since June, 2015. This has put social service organizations, the
36 homeless, and college students in an especially difficult position. Cuts to care for seniors, after-
37 school programs, counseling for assault victims, drug and alcohol rehab programs threaten too
38 many vulnerable Illinoisans. Mathew 25 calls upon us to care for those less fortunate, and yet in
39 this budget stalemate, it is those very people that are the most affected. We must hold our
40 Illinois Administration accountable to the people of Illinois and end the stalemate, agree on a
41 budget, and fund the programs that care for the people of Illinois.
42
43
44
45

46 **Document: 700.10 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

47 **Name: Care for the Environment**

1 **Authors: NIC Methodist Federation for Social Action and NIC Reconciling Ministries**
2 **Network Taskforce**
3 **CCFA Comment:**

4
5 **ACTION:**

6 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church calls upon President Donald
7 Trump and Scott Pruitt, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take steps to
8 ensure that actions taken in the past to protect our clean air and water and to reduce the
9 harmful effects of climate change be safe-guarded in future legislation or executive actions. A
10 letter to this effect will be sent to President Trump and Scott Pruitt, and will be made available
11 for all Northern Illinois United Methodists to affirm by sending as individuals or congregations.
12

13 **RATIONALE:**

14 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as said "Scientific evidence for warming of the
15 climate system is unequivocal. Ninety-seven percent of scientists believe climate change is very
16 likely human caused, and it is proceeding at a rate that is unprecedented in the past 1300 years.
17 According to NASA, evidence for rapid climate change is compelling: sea levels have risen,
18 global temperatures have risen, oceans are warming, ice sheets are shrinking, there is less Arctic
19 sea ice, glaciers are retreating, there are more extreme weather events, ocean waters are
20 becoming more acidic,, and there is less snow cover. By rolling back climate change regulations,
21 we are placing the future of our planet in even greater peril. We owe it to future generations to
22 turn back the effects of climate change.
23
24
25
26

27 **Document: 700.11 (passed on Consent Calendar 6/5/2017)**

28 **Name: Affordable Health Care**

29 **Authors: NIC Methodist Federation for Social Action and NIC Reconciling Ministries**

30 **Network Taskforce**

31 **CCFA Comment:**

32
33 **ACTION:**

34 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church calls upon President
35 Donald Trump and Speaker of the House Paul Ryan to work in a bipartisan manner to expand
36 the Affordable Care Act and continue to aggressively work to make healthcare affordable for
37 all. A letter to this effect will be sent to President Trump and Speaker Ryan and will be made
38 available for all Northern Illinois United Methodists to affirm by sending as individuals or
39 congregations.
40

41 **RATIONALE:**

42 The Affordable Care Act decreased the number of uninsured by 24 million. Thirty two states
43 (including Washington DC) have adopted the Medicaid extension, and had fewer uninsured
44 than those who had not adopted it (7.3% to 14.1%). A study by the Agency for Healthcare
45 Research and Quality estimates that the ACA is responsible for preventing nearly 50,000 deaths.
46 It is not a perfect healthcare law, but working in a bipartisan manner, it can be improved. The
47 effort in the US House of Representatives to repeal and replace earlier this year would have

1 leave many without healthcare options, and it would increase costs for those in healthcare
2 plans. Efforts should be made to expand the provisions to cover even more people and work
3 toward keeping overall costs low.
4
5
6
7

8 **Document: 700.12**

9 **Name: Supporting Sanctuary in NIC**

10 **Author(s): Rev. Paula Cripps-Vallejo; Rev. Luis F. Reyes; Rev. Alka Lyall; Rev. David**
11 **Aslesen; Elisa Gatz, Co-Lay Leader of NIC and member of Wesley United Methodist Church,**
12 **Sterling; NIC Committee on Native American Ministries, NIC Hispanic/Latino Caucus**

13 **CCFA Comment:**
14

15 **ACTION:**

16 The Northern Illinois Conference declares solidarity with all individuals and families regardless
17 of their refugee or immigration status or documentation, and with those who come to their aid,
18 and takes the following actions:
19

20 1. The Northern Illinois Conference encourages all of its congregations, boards, and other
21 bodies to engage, before the next Annual Conference Session, in intentional education and
22 relationship-building regarding welcome, ministry, and advocacy with persons regardless of
23 their refugee or immigration status or documentation.
24

25 2. The Northern Illinois Conference encourages all of its congregations, boards, and other
26 bodies to prayerfully discern actions they can take in their particular ministry context and
27 connectionally to extend greater hospitality, greater ministries of justice and compassion,
28 and/or increased advocacy for and with all people regardless of their refugee or immigration
29 status or documentation, and when and where feasible to take those actions.
30

31 3. The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms that a *sanctuary* is
32 not only a space for worship, but is primarily a place of refuge and safety; the NIC therefore
33 recognizes that when a congregation or other body of the Conference discerns and declares
34 itself a "Sanctuary" or in "Solidarity," this definition applies to all properties owned or held in
35 trust by and/or all ministry programs offered by that member congregation or group.
36
37

38 **RATIONALE:**

39 There is a strong Biblical mandate to care for persons who become displaced or have the status
40 of immigrant or refugee, rooted in the experiences of the Hebrew people enduring and escaping
41 from oppression in Egypt, and in Jesus' family fleeing the violence of Herod (see Genesis 12:10 -
42 Abram flees famine, Exodus 1 - the people face oppression in Egypt and will later escape,
43 Leviticus 19:33-34 - the people are commanded to treat "aliens" with fairness because they were
44 once aliens themselves, Matthew 2:13-15 - Jesus' parents flee Herod, Hebrews 13:1-2 - the
45 people are encouraged to show hospitality to strangers).
46

1 The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state: “We recognize, embrace, and
2 affirm all persons, regardless of country of origin, as members of the family of God. We affirm
3 the right of all persons to equal opportunities for employment, access to housing, health care,
4 education, and freedom from social discrimination. We urge the Church and society to
5 recognize the gifts, contributions, and struggles of those who are immigrants and to advocate
6 for justice for all. We oppose immigration policies that separate family members from each
7 other or that include detention of families with children, and we call on local churches to be in
8 ministry with immigrant families” (*Book of Discipline* 2016, ¶162 H).

10 The Northern Illinois Conference has a strong history of advocating for and with all persons,
11 regardless of their country of origin and regardless of their immigration status or
12 documentation, through the work of Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) and recent training
13 events, and regardless of their class, race, sexual orientation or gender identity, origin. NIL has
14 strongly spoken against any injustice and created a safe place for all who find themselves in a
15 minority.

17 The Sanctuary Movement in the United States, past and present, calls upon churches to be
18 public and intentional in offering hospitality, shelter, resources, and logistical and legal
19 assistance to individuals and families regardless of their refugee or immigration status or
20 documentation.

25 **Document: 700.13**

26 **Name: A Call to End Gun Violence**

27 **Author(s): Chicago Urban Strategy (Urban Network), Rev. Robert E. Biekman, Rev. Andrea
28 Davidson, Rev. Lindsey Long Joyce, Rev. Rodney Walker**

29 **CCFA Comment: *CCFA Comment will be coming – it will be an additional download
30 available on the Conference website no later than May 9.***

32 **ACTION:**

33 The Northern Illinois Conference will establish the elimination of gun violence as a
34 priority. In establishing the elimination of handgun violence as a priority, the Northern
35 Illinois Conference (NIC) will work in collaboration with organizations like the Illinois
36 Council Against Handgun Violence, Heeding God’s Call, Community Renewal Society
37 and Live Free Chicago. This collaborative work will include:

39 **Equipping & Educating Congregations and Communities by:**

- 40 • Making a visible witness to the sin of gun violence and the hope of healing our
41 communities
- 42 • Equipping local churches to include gun violence prevention in sermons, Bible
43 studies, prayers and conversations.

- 1 • Remembering victims by sponsoring events like “A Concert Across America to End
2 Gun Violence”¹ or host a Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath.”²
- 3 • Convening a conference-wide and district-wide “teach-ins” to include faith
4 communities, law enforcement, mental health and public health professionals from
5 areas where gun violence has had a significant impact to develop action plans and
6 identify ways that the NIC can effectively respond to the growing tragedy.
- 7 • Educating congregations and communities on the public health crisis of gun
8 violence, gun violence prevention, gun safety, using the United Methodist General
9 Board of Church and Society’s “*Kingdom Dreams, Violent Realities: Reflections on Gun
10 Violence from Micah 4:1-4*” and the United Methodist Resolutions on Gun Violence.

11

12 Advocating for Greater Regulation by:

- 13 • Developing advocacy groups in local churches and districts that will work toward
14 impacting public policy around gun violence, with particular emphasis on
15 handguns, handgun ammunition, assault weapons, automatic weapon conversion
16 kits and guns that cannot be detected by traditionally used metal-detection devices.
- 17 • Advocating for local, statewide and federal legislation that will regulate the
18 manufacture, sale and registration of guns. This legislation should include
19 provisions for:
 - 20 ○ Universal background checks
 - 21 ○ Ensuring guns are sold through licensed retailers
 - 22 ○ Prohibiting all individuals convicted of violent crimes from purchasing a gun
23 for a fixed time period
 - 24 ○ Prohibiting all individuals under restraining order due to threat of violence
25 from purchasing a gun
 - 26 ○ Prohibiting persons with serious mental illness, who pose a danger to
27 themselves and their communities, from purchasing a gun
 - 28 ○ Ensuring greater access to services for those suffering from mental illness
 - 29 ○ Establishing a minimum age of 21 years for a gun purchase or possession
 - 30 ○ Banning large-capacity ammunition magazines and weapons designed to fire
31 multiple rounds each time the trigger is pulled
 - 32 ○ Promoting new technologies to aid law-enforcement agencies to trace crime
33 guns and promote public safety.
 - 34 ○ Calling on federal and state governments to provide significant assistance to
35 victims of gun violence.
 - 36 ○ Calling on state legislature to address the lack of economic opportunity
37 fueling gun violence, and to avoid just focusing on legislation that increases
38 sentences for gun possession without also addressing economic development
39 (jobs) and penalties for those who illegally sell guns. Thusly, call our
40 representatives to avoid further disproportionately imprisoning persons from
41 racial minority communities without working to remediate the underlying
42 causes.
 - 43 ○ Encouraging congregations to partner with local law-enforcement agencies
44 and community based organizations to identify gun retailers that engage in

¹ <http://concertacrossamerica.org>

² <http://www.decembersabbath.org>

1 retail practices designed to circumvent laws on gun sales and ownership and
2 to organize campaigns to encourage gun retailers to gain full legal
3 compliance with appropriate standards and laws.
4

5 **Developing Programs to:**

- 6 • Create or support safe places for children and youth when out of school, such as
7 “Safe Havens,” Camps, After School/Out of School time programs.
- 8 • Create restorative justice peace hubs in communities most impacted by gun
9 violence.
- 10 • Offer services including but not limited to: job training, resume workshops, job
11 fairs, social workers, job developers, entrepreneurship funding, and budgeting
12 workshops, to address the need for economic opportunity in communities
13 impacted by gun violence.
14

15 **RATIONALE:**

16 The 2016 General Conference of the United Methodist Church passed a resolution based
17 on Matthew 5:9 and Micah 4:1-4, stating the following:

18 *“In days to come, / the mountain of the LORD’s house / shall be established as the*
19 *highest of the mountains, / and shall be raised up above the hills. / Peoples shall*
20 *stream to it, / and many nations shall come and say: / ‘Come, let us go up to the*
21 *mountain of the LORD, / to the house of the God of Jacob; / that he may teach us his*
22 *ways / and that we may walk in his paths.’ / For out of Zion shall go forth*
23 *instruction, / and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. / He shall judge between*
24 *many peoples, / and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; / they shall*
25 *beat their swords into plowshares, / and their spears into pruning hooks; / nation*
26 *shall not lift up sword against nation, / neither shall they learn war any more; / but*
27 *they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, / and no one*
28 *shall make them afraid; / for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken”* ^{NRSV}
29

30 Micah’s prophetic dream points to a time when all peoples will journey to God’s
31 presence so God “may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths” (4:2).
32 Micah describes God as the final judge and the nations will travel to God’s presence out
33 of their desire to live in peace without violence and bloodshed.
34

35 Therefore, “we call upon United Methodists to address gun violence in their local
36 context”.³
37

38 We, as United Methodists in the Northern Illinois Conference affirm this call and seek to
39 clarify the ways we are called to live out this resolution within our conference.
40

41 Each year in America, on average over 100,000 people are shot in murders, assaults,
42 suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, or by police intervention.⁴ Of that
43 number, 30,000 people (including children) die each year from gun violence.⁵

³ See full text here: <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/gun-violence>

⁴ www.bradycampaign.org

⁵ <https://www.ama-assn.org/ama-calls-gun-violence-public-health-crisis>

1
2 On June 21, 2016, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle alongside Cook County
3 Hospital executives and other elected officials endorsed a statement made by the
4 American Medical Association classifying gun violence as a, “public health crisis.”
5

6 In Chicago alone, in 2017 over 700 people lost their lives to gun violence.⁶ This statistic
7 only increases when we look at our conference as a whole, beyond city and county limits.
8 One fact remains for every single church and every single United Methodist in the
9 Northern Illinois Conference; we are living in an epidemic of violence, and remain silent
10 about it when considering its social/economic costs and the lives of Christ’s beloved
11 people are at risk.
12
13
14
15
16
17

18 **Document: 700.14**

19 **Name: Organizational Structure for the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of the United**
20 **Methodist Church**

21 **Author: Organizational Task Force**

22 **CCFA Comment: CCFA Comment will be coming – it will be an additional download**
23 **available on the Conference website no later than May 9.**
24

25 **ACTION:**

26 Adopt and implement an organizational structure for the Northern Illinois Conference (“NIC”).
27 **Organizational Structure for the Northern Illinois Annual Conference (“NIC”)**

28 **I. Shepherding Teams.** The organizational structure shall be centered on an Annual
29 Conference Shepherding Team (“ACST”). There shall be a separate District
30 Shepherding Team (DST) in each of the districts. One member of each DST (6
31 members in total) shall also serve as a member of the ACST as outlined below. The
32 ACST shall be an adaptive learning organization whose primary purposes shall be to
33 coordinate and communicate the ministry of the NIC for the sake of making
34 disciples for Jesus Christ. The primary purposes of each DST shall be to coordinate
35 the equipping of local churches so that they might be faithful, Christ-centered
36 communities of worship, prayer, witness and change, and to enhance the connection
37 between local churches, the districts and the NIC.
38

39 **II. Definitions.**

40 **a. Diversity.** The term “Diversity” shall mean the inclusion of individuals who
41 differ in race, culture, national origin, geographic residence, gender, sexual
42 orientation, age and lay or clergy status for the purpose of benefitting from
43 varied experiences and perspectives. The commitment to diversity and inclusion
44 is rooted in a deep desire to embody and reflect God’s vision for all of creation.

⁶ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-two-shot-to-death-in-uptown-marks-first-homicide-of-2017-20170101-story.html>

1
2 **b. Ethnic Caucus.** The term “Ethnic Caucus” shall refer to a group organized for
3 the purpose of advocating for the participation and priorities of a particular
4 ethnic group, and recognized by the NIC. Currently, the NIC recognizes The
5 Fellowship of Asian Americans, Black Methodists for Church Renewal and El
6 Concilio as Ethnic Caucuses.
7

8 **III. Annual Conference Shepherding Team (“ACST”)**
9

10 **a. Responsibilities.** The responsibilities of the ACST shall include,
11 i. Leading as a learning organization in addressing the technical and
12 adaptive, challenges and opportunities presented to the NIC.
13 ii. Providing coordination of the ministry, mission and vision of the NIC.
14 iii. Discerning a 5-year vision plan; presenting it for approval by NIC;
15 communicating it throughout the NIC, monitoring and adapting it on an
16 annual basis.
17 iv. Focusing NIC resources to equip local churches and ministry settings to
18 make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
19 v. Facilitating communication and healthy relationships between districts,
20 NIC leadership, staff, committees and ministries.
21 vi. Advocating, monitoring and celebrating diversity at every level of
22 leadership throughout the NIC.
23 vii. Stewarding financial and leadership resources for maximum missional
24 impact. The role of the ACST in the budgeting process shall be to
25 augment the existing process in which the budget is prepared by the
26 Conference Council on Finance and Administration (“CCFA”) and
27 approved by the NIC. The ACST shall consult with CCFA in the
28 allocation of resources according to the missional priorities of the NIC.
29 viii. Resolving leadership and function questions that do not require approval
30 by the NIC between annual conference sessions.
31 ix. Guiding the NIC in the event of a significant shift in the denomination or
32 jurisdictional realignment of conferences.
33 x. Adapting the organizational structure further to align with the missional
34 priorities of the NIC.
35 xi. Developing clear and concise qualitative and quantitative metrics to
36 evaluate the effectiveness of ACST structure and work.
37 xii. Reporting annually to NIC on fulfillment of the above responsibilities.
38

39 **b. Core Areas of focus.** The ACST shall prayerfully focus on the following Core
40 Areas of priority identified in the Landscape process:
41 i. Congregational Life
42 1. Creating and revitalizing congregational cultures that are deep in
43 faith and engaged for evangelism.
44 2. Developing new churches and faith communities.
45 3. Assessing and reconfiguring local churches.
46 ii. Clergy Life
47 1. Fostering clergy health and morale.

2. Fostering an environment that identifies and supports persons with a clear sense of call and commitment to set apart ministry.
 3. Fostering on-going faith formation.
 4. Ensuring development and accountability of clergy.
- iii. Missional Life
1. Equipping, supporting and connecting local churches for missions of mercy (direct service) in their local communities, across the NIC and beyond.
 2. Equipping, supporting and connecting local churches for justice (systemic change) work in their local communities, across the state and beyond.
 3. Advocating diversity, inclusiveness and cultural competency.
- iv. Connectional Resources
1. Managing and allocating conference resources toward NIC vision and strategy.
 2. Evaluating, assessing and communicating the apportionment formula on an on-going basis.
 3. Developing systems of administration for use by local churches.

c. **Membership.**

i. **Members.** The ACST shall have the following members:

- Voice and Vote (20 Members)
 - Co-Chair - Lay
 - Co-Chair - Clergy
 - Conference Lay Leader
 - Board of Trustees, Chair or Designate
 - Council on Finance and Administration, Chair or Designate
 - Committee on Nominations, Chair or Designate
 - Board of Ordained Ministry, Chair or Designate
 - Annual Conference Committee, Chair or Designate
 - Church Development and Revitalization, Designate
 - Age Level Ministries, Designate
 - Justice and Mercy Ministries, Designate
 - 3 Ethnic Caucus Designates
 - Aurora DST, Chair (Clergy though 2020)
 - Chicago Northwest DST, Chair (Lay though 2020)
 - Chicago Southern DST, Chair (Clergy though 2020)
 - DeKalb DST, Chair (Lay though 2020)
 - Elgin DST, Chair (Lay though 2020)
 - Rockford DST, Chair (Clergy though 2020)
- Voice Only; No Vote (3 Members)
 - Bishop
 - Director of Connectional Ministries
 - Communications Staff Member

1 ii. **Selection of Members.** Members of the ACST shall be selected, as
2 follows:
3

- 4 1. Co-Chairs shall be appointed by the Bishop.
- 5 2. Conference Lay Leader shall be chosen per Disciplinary
6 requirements in the ordinary course of the nominations process.
- 7 3. Chairs of Board of Trustees, Council on Finance and
8 Administration, Committee on Nominations, Board of Ordained
9 Ministry and Annual Conference Committee shall be chosen per
10 Disciplinary requirements in the ordinary course of the
11 nominations process. In the event that a member of a committee,
12 council or board is to be designated as the member of the ACST in
13 place of the chair, such committee, council or board shall adopt its
14 own process for designation.
- 15 4. Designates of Church Development and Revitalization, Age Level
16 Ministries, and Justice and Mercy Ministries shall each be chosen
17 separately, according to the following process:
 - 18 a. The chairs of the Constituent Groups of Church
19 Development and Revitalization, Age Level Ministries,
20 and Justice and Mercy Ministries shall gather in separate
21 meetings, each convened by the Director of Connectional
22 Ministries for the purpose of nominating 3 candidates for
23 each Designate position.

24
25 The initial Constituent Groups for purposes of nominating
26 candidates to be the first Designates to the ACST shall be:

- 27 1. Church Development and Revitalization (7
28 Constituent Groups)
 - 29 • Committee of Accessibility Ministries
 - 30 • Congregational Development and
31 Redevelopment (Code Red)
 - 32 • Evangelism Work Area
 - 33 • National Plans (Hispanic, Korean, Asian
34 Language, Pacific Islander – all related to GBGM)
 - 35 • Strengthening the Black Church in the 21st
36 Century (SBC21)
 - 37 • Spiritual Formation Work Area
 - 38 • Worship Work Area
 - 39 2. Age Level Ministries (8 Constituent Groups)
 - 40 • Children’s Ministries
 - 41 • Conference Board of Higher Education and
42 Campus Ministry (CBHECM)
 - 43 • Education Work Area
 - 44 • Older Adult Ministries
 - 45 • Outdoor and Retreat Ministries (ORM)
- 46

- Safe Sanctuaries
- Young Adult Ministries
- Youth Ministries

3. Justice and Mercy Ministries (8 Constituent Groups)

- Board of Church and Society
- Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relations (CCUIR)
- Commission on Religion and Race (CORR)
- Commission on Status and Role of Women (CSROW)
- Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns
- Native American Ministries
- Restorative and Transformative Justice
- Conference Board of Global Ministries (CBGM), including:
 - Conference Mission Secretary
 - District Mission Secretaries
 - District United Methodist Women (UMW) Representatives
 - Disaster Coordinator
 - Hunger Coordinator
 - Refugee Coordinator
 - Volunteers in Mission (VIM) Coordinator
 - Urban Ministries
 - Rural (Keagy) Ministries
 - United Methodist Women Representative
 - United Methodist Men Representative

b. The Committee on Nominations shall select each Designate from among the 3 nominees with the primary objective of ensuring diversity on the ACST.

5. Designates of the Ethnic Caucuses shall be chosen by the Ethnic Caucuses pursuant to their own process for designation.

6. Chairs of the DSTs shall be chosen as outlined in Paragraph IV.b.ii., below.

iii. Qualifications and Commitment of Members.

1. Co-Chairs and Designates of Church Development and Revitalization, Age Level Ministries, and Justice and Mercy

1 Ministries shall serve on the ACST exclusively; they shall not
2 serve in other positions in the NIC or an Ethnic Caucus.

- 3 2. Designates of Church Development and Revitalization, Age Level
4 Ministries, and Justice and Mercy Ministries shall have
5 demonstrated a genuine interest and concern in most, if not all, of
6 the Constituent Groups being represented and commitment to
7 keeping up with their work and concerns.
- 8 3. Members of the ACST shall have demonstrated a genuine interest
9 and commitment to stewardship of the mission, priorities and
10 vision of the NIC.
- 11 4. Members of the ACST shall be expected to attend meetings
12 themselves to ensure the cohesion and continuity of the team. As
13 shared experience contributes to shared visioning and leadership,
14 there is no substitute for attendance.

15
16 **iv. Terms.**

- 17
18 1. To ensure both continuity as well as constant renewal of the
19 ACST, Voting Members shall be limited to a single term of four
20 (4) years unless membership derives from a position in the NIC
21 having different term requirements.
- 22 2. Co-Chairs of the ACST shall serve 2 years as Vice Chair
23 followed by 2 years as Chair. The first Chair shall commence
24 his/her term on or about November 2017, serve as Chair for 2
25 years and rotate off the ACST on June 30, 2020. The first Vice
26 Chair shall commence his/her term on or about November 2017,
27 become Chair on July 1, 2020, and rotate off on June 30, 2022. A
28 new Vice Chair will commence his/her term every 2 years as the
29 previous Vice Chair rotates to the Chair position.
- 30 3. To ensure continuity, Members shall serve four year terms
31 commencing either,
 - 32 a. July 1, 2020, and on July 1 of each year of a General
33 Conference. The initial term of those in such positions
34 shall not be a full four years; it shall commence on or
35 about November 2017 and terminate on June 30, 2020, or
 - 36 b. July 1, 2022, and on July 1 of each year which is two
37 years after the year of a General Conference. The first
38 term of those in such positions shall commence on or
39 about November 2017 and terminate on June 30, 2022.
- 40 4. The Conference Lay Leader and the Chairs or Designates of the
41 Board of Trustees, Council on Finance and Administration,
42 Committee on Nominations, Board of Ordained Ministry and
43 Annual Conference Committee shall serve terms pursuant to
44 Paragraph III.c.iv.2.a., above.
- 45 5. Designates of Ethnic Caucuses shall serve terms pursuant to
46 Paragraph III.c.iv.2.a., above.

6. Designates of Church Development and Revitalization, Age Level Ministries, and Justice and Mercy Ministries shall serve terms pursuant to Paragraph III.c.iv.2.b., above.
7. Co-Chairs of the DSTs who serve on the ACST pursuant to Paragraph IV.b.iv.2., below, shall serve terms pursuant to Paragraph III.c.iv.2.b., above.

- **Meetings.** The ACST shall meet at least four (4) times per year. Each meeting shall have a focus such as analysis and review of the budget, preparation for Annual Conference, leadership development and learning, and acquiring input for more effective ministry. The schedule and topics of meetings shall be determined by the ACST.

IV. District Shepherding Teams (“DST”)

- a. **Responsibilities.** The responsibilities of each DST shall include,
 - i. Leading as a learning organization in addressing the technical and adaptive, challenges and opportunities presented to the District.
 - ii. Coordinating the equipping of local churches and enhancing the connection between local churches.
 1. Ascertaining information, such as,
 - a. Celebrations and best practices,
 - b. Challenges and shared needs,
 - c. Opportunities for shared ministries.
 2. Providing or directing local churches to training opportunities suited to the particular district.
 - iii. Communicating local needs, challenges and celebrations to ACST for coordinated resourcing and sharing.
 - iv. Communicating vision and ministry priorities of NIC to the district and local churches and coordinating implementation as best lived out in the district.

b. Membership.

- i. **Members.** Each DST shall have the following members:
 - Voice and Vote (11+ Members)
 - Co-Chair – District Lay Leader
 - Co-Chair – Clergy
 - District Lay Leader(s) (in districts with multiple lay leaders, all shall be members of the DST; one at a time shall serve as Co-Chair)
 - Board on Church Location and Building, Chair or Designate
 - District Committee on Ordained Ministry, Chair or Designate
 - New Church Development and Revitalization Team (formerly District Strategy Team), Chair or Designate

- 3 Lay Members At Large
- 3 Clergy Members At Large
- Voice Only; No Vote (1 Member)
 - District Superintendent

ii. **Selection of Members.** Members of each DST shall be selected, as follows:

1. District Lay Leader(s) shall be chosen per Disciplinary requirements in the ordinary course of the nominations process.
2. Chairs of Board on Church Location and Building, Committee on Ordained Ministry and New Church Development and Revitalization Team (formerly District Strategy Team) shall be chosen per Disciplinary requirements. In the event that a member of a committee, board or team is to be designated as the member of the ACST in place of the chair, such committee, board or team shall adopt its own process for designation.
3. Clergy Co-Chair shall be selected by the District Lay Leader(s) and District Superintendent.
4. At Large Lay and Clergy Members shall be selected by the District Lay Leader(s) and District Superintendent.
 - a. They may represent the particular ministry priorities of each district, e.g., they may include cluster leaders, Lay Servant Academy directors, representatives from mission agencies in the district, etc.
 - b. They may be selected from among recommendations solicited at annual church conferences or other district entities.

iii. **Qualifications and Commitment of Members.** Members of the DST shall be expected to attend meetings themselves to ensure the cohesion and continuity of the team. As shared experience contributes to shared visioning and leadership, there is no substitute for attendance.

iv. **Terms.**

1. To ensure reinvigoration of the DST, Members shall be limited to a single term of four (4) years unless membership derives from a position having different term requirements.
2. To ensure equal representation of laity and clergy on the ACST at any one time, half the districts shall be represented by the Lay Co-Chair and the other half shall be represented by the Clergy Co-Chair.
 - a. On the initial ACST, through June 30, 2022, the DST representatives shall be:
 - i. Aurora DST - Clergy Co-Chair
 - ii. Chicago Northwest DST - Lay Co-Chair

- iii. Chicago Southern DST – Clergy Co-Chair
 - iv. DeKalb DST – Lay Co-Chair
 - v. Elgin DST – Lay Co-Chair
 - vi. Rockford DST – Clergy Co-Chair
- b. From July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2026, the DST representatives shall be:
- vii. Aurora DST – Lay Co-Chair
 - viii. Chicago NW DST – Clergy Co-Chair
 - ix. Chicago S DST – Lay Co-Chair
 - x. DeKalb DST – Clergy Co-Chair
 - xi. Elgin DST – Clergy Co-Chair
 - xii. Rockford DST – Lay Co-Chair

4. To ensure continuity, Members shall have four year terms commencing either,
- a. July 1, 2020, and on July 1 of each year of a General Conference. The initial term of those in such positions shall not be a full four years; it shall commence on or about November 2017 and terminate on June 30, 2020, or
 - b. July 1, 2022, and on July 1 of each year which is two years after the year of a General Conference. The first term of those in such positions shall commence on or about November 2017 and terminate on June 30, 2022.
5. The District Lay Leader(s) and the Chairs of Board on Church Location and Building, Committee on Ordained Ministry and New Church Development and Revitalization Team (formerly District Strategy Team) shall serve terms pursuant to Paragraph to Paragraph IV.b.iv.4.a., above.
6. The At Large Lay and Clergy Members shall serve terms pursuant to Paragraph IV.b.iv.4.b., above.

c. **Meetings.** Each DST shall meet at least four (4) times per year. The schedule and topics of meetings shall be determined by each DST.

V. Diversity of Membership on ACST and DSTs.

- a. The Committee on Nominations and Bishop shall make diversity of the ACST a primary consideration in,
 - i. Appointment of Co-Chairs,
 - ii. Selection of NIC Lay Leader(s),
 - iii. Composition of the Board of Trustees, Conference Council on Finance and Administration, Committee on Nominations, Board of Ordained Ministry and Annual Conference Committee, which choose or elect Chairs or Designates to serve on the ACST,
 - iv. Selection of Designates of Church Development and Revitalization, Age Level Ministries, and Justice and Mercy Ministries.
- b. Each District Superintendent and District Lay Leader(s) shall make diversity in each DST a primary consideration in,

- i. Selection of District Lay Leader(s) and Lay Co-Chair,
- ii. Selection of Clergy Co-Chair,
- iii. Rotation of DST Co-Chairs onto the ACST,
- iv. Selection of Chairs of Board on Church Location and Building, District Committee on Ordained Ministry and New Church Development and Revitalization Team (formerly District Strategy Team),
- v. Selection of At Large Lay and Clergy Members.

VI. Evaluation of Structure. The organizational structure of ACST and DSTs shall be subject to formal evaluation at Annual Conferences in 2019, 2020 and quadrennially thereafter. This evaluation of structure shall be separate from annual reports on the substantive work of the ACST provided for in Paragraph III.a.xii., above.

- a. The evaluation of structure shall consider features of the ACST and DSTs or their objectives, such as,
 - i. Diversity of the ACST and DSTs
 - ii. Quality of Communication by ACST and DSTs
 - iii. Flexibility and Adaptability of ACST and DSTs to particular issues or events
 - iv. Improving Clergy Morale
 - v. Equipping Local Churches
 - vi. Strengthening the Connection
 - vii. Streamlining committees and enhancing effectiveness of leadership structure
 - viii. Recruitment of new leaders from across the NIC
- b. The evaluation of structure shall poll groups such as,
 - i. Local congregations and faith communities
 - ii. NIC committees, councils and boards
- c. The evaluation of structure shall be conducted via a mechanism such as,
 - i. Electronic Survey
 - ii. Listening Sessions

VII. Initial Formation of Organizational Structure. The formation of the ACST and DSTs shall proceed along a timeline which shall include, but not be limited to, the following milestones:

- **Summer and Fall 2017**
 - Members of the ACST shall be selected pursuant to Paragraph III.c.ii., above.
 - Members of the DSTs shall be selected pursuant to Paragraph IV.b.ii., above.
- **Fall 2017.** Cabinet shall include in the agenda for local church conferences,
 - an explanation of the ACST and the role of the DST in coordinating the equipping local churches and rejuvenating the connection, and

- 1 ○ an opportunity for local congregations to recommend individuals to serve
2 as At Large Lay and Clergy Members.
- 3
- 4 ▪ **November 11, 2017. First meeting of the ACST.** The focus shall be on
5 organization, orientation and learning of members of the ACST.
- 6
- 7 • **January 20, 2018. Second meeting of the ACST.** The focus shall be on learning
8 with leaders of existing committees and obtaining their input. The schedule and
9 topics of future meetings shall be determined by the ACST.
- 10
- 11 ▪ **Annual Conference 2019 and 2020 and quadrennially thereafter**
- 12
- 13 ○ Report by ACST to Annual Conference regarding assessment of structure;
- 14 ○ Opportunity for feedback from Annual Conference;
- 15 ○ Possible submission of legislation proposing adaptation of structure. Such
16 adaptive legislation may be proposed at any annual conference.
- 17
- 18 ▪ **July 2020. Rotation of Membership.**
- 19 ○ The first Chair of the ACST shall rotate off the ACST. The first Vice Chair
20 shall become Chair and a new Vice Chair shall be appointed by the
21 Bishop.
- 22 ○ The Conference Lay Leader and Chairs or Designates of Board of
23 Trustees, Council on Finance and Administration, Committee on
24 Nominations, Board of Ordained Ministry and Annual Conference
25 Committee shall change per Disciplinary requirements in the ordinary
26 course of the nominations process.
- 27 ○ Designates of the Ethnic Caucuses shall rotate off the ACST and be
28 replaced by newly selected Designates.
- 29 ○ The District Lay Leader(s) and the Chairs or Designates of Board on
30 Church Location and Building, District Committee on Ordained Ministry
31 and New Church Development and Revitalization Team (formerly
32 District Strategy Team) shall change per Disciplinary requirements in the
33 ordinary course of the nominations process.
- 34
- 35 ▪ **July 2022. Rotation of Membership.**
- 36 ○ The second Chair of the ACST shall rotate off the ACST. The Vice Chair
37 shall become Chair and a new Vice Chair shall be appointed by the
38 Bishop.
- 39 ○ Designates of Church Development and Revitalization, Age Level
40 Ministries, and Justice and Mercy Ministries shall rotate off the ACST and
41 be replaced by Designates newly selected by their respective Constituent
42 Groups
- 43 ○ Co-Chairs representing DSTs on the ACST shall rotate. Those DSTs
44 previously represented by the Lay Co-Chair shall begin to be represented
45 by the Clergy C-Chair and vice versa.
- 46 ○ At Lay and Clergy Members of the DSTs shall rotate off the DST and be
47 replaced by newly selected Members.

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VIII. Future Legislation.

- a. Following adoption of this resolution, the Standing Rules of the NIC will be updated to reflect these changes and presented to the Annual Conference in 2018 for approval.
- b. To complete the remaining task of streamlining conference committees, the Organizational Task Force shall be reformulated to evaluate the existing committees and propose, to the Annual Conference in 2018, a streamlined committee structure as well as appropriate adaptations to the ACST and DSTs. The reformulated OTF shall include ten (10) members; five (5) shall carry forward from the existing OTF and five (5) shall be newly selected. The reformulated OTF shall include the Chair of the Committee on Nominations. The remaining 9 members shall be selected by such Chair and the Director of Connectional Ministries in consultation with the Bishop.

1 **RATIONALE:**

2 According to the *Book of Discipline*, the “annual conference is responsible for structuring its
3 ministries and administrative procedures in order to accomplish its purpose,” It is “permitted
4 the flexibility to design conference and district structures in ways that best support the mission
5 of making disciples of Jesus Christ . . .” ¶610

6
7 Currently, the Northern Illinois Conference (“NIC”) has 10 administrative committees, 30
8 program areas and dozens of task forces and special interest groups. To the extent that they are
9 unified, it is within the Program Council. However, the Program Council accounts for only
10 approximately 20% of the budget of the NIC. There is no central body coordinating all the
11 ministries of the NIC.

12
13 The Cabinet provides valuable leadership on resourcing, equipping, and strategizing the
14 ministries of NIC. However, its primary responsibilities are clergy deployment and supervision,
15 with the District Superintendents functioning as "an extension of the superintending role of the
16 Bishop." (BOD 403.2)

17
18 The need for a central body became apparent in the financial crisis in 2014. At that time, the
19 Conference Council on Finance and Administration needed advice on cutting the budget but
20 had nowhere to turn. Subsequently, the Landscape Survey in 2015 and the listening sessions in
21 2016 revealed a broader desire for a central body devoted to planning strategically, aligning
22 resources with mission, coordinating and communicating the ministry of the NIC.

23
24 At the Annual Conference in 2016, the NIC adopted a resolution (Resolution 700.01) directing
25 the formation of an Organizational Task Force (“OTF”) to create a proposal for an alternative
26 organizational structure. The resolution provides that,

27 The restructure could include, but would not be limited to:

- 28
- 29 • An organizational structure that can
 - 30 ○ Plan strategically,
 - 31 ○ Align resources and mission,
 - 32 ○ Create an intersection between administrative, program and superintending
33 functions,
 - 34 ○ Streamline the work of the conference committees,
 - 35 ○ Respond with flexibility,
 - 36 ○ Be accountable to conference membership, and
 - 37 ○ Act with coordinated efficiency.
 - 38 • Such a structure would enhance the focus on purpose, mission and core values,
39 while providing a forum for communication and coordination. Resolution 700.01

40 The proposed organizational structure is designed to accomplish all the above goals with the
41 exception that it does not streamline the work of conference committees. That task has been left
42 for the future. Pending future reorganization, the existing committees have been aligned with
43 the proposed organizational structure. Future streamlining of the underlying committees may
44 also result in adaptation of the overarching organizational structure.

45
46 In creating the proposed structure, the OTF followed the process described in its Historical
47 Report. It was particularly mindful of the following concepts and objectives.

1
2 **Shepherding.** The fundamental image for the organizational structure is that of a shepherd. It
3 evokes the assurances of Psalm 23 and the role of the shepherd in leading the flock to green
4 pastures, attending to the entire flock without losing sight of individual sheep, confronting
5 times challenge and fear as well as maximizing times of ease and abundance.
6

7 The Annual Conference Shepherding Team (“ACST”) will be an adaptive learning organization
8 that will focus on coordinating and communicating the ministry of the NIC. Each District
9 Shepherding Team (“DST”) will focus on coordinating the equipping of local churches and
10 enhancing the connection between them, the districts and the NIC.
11

12 **Efficiency and Flexibility.** The ACST is *not* intended to be a connectional table or a committee
13 of chairs including representatives of all the discrete committees (currently, in excess of 40). It is
14 intended to be a small, nimble team in which all members are charged with focusing on all
15 aspects of ministry and creating a unified strategy for the NIC. Particular members will be
16 selected to inform that strategy with the perspectives and priorities of broad areas of ministry.
17 Further, at least one meeting of the ACST per year will be devoted to seeking input from the
18 discrete committees.
19

20 **Equipping, Coordinating and Communicating.** The role of the ACST and DSTs will be to
21 equip, coordinate and communicate the ministry of the NIC. The committees of the NIC and
22 districts and the local churches will continue to perform the ministry. In the process, they will
23 inform the DSTs and ACST and contribute to shaping the ministry of the NIC for the future.
24

25 **Learning.** The ACST is intended to be a learning organization that encourages and facilitates
26 the learning, critical thinking and experimentation of its members, communicates new
27 knowledge throughout the NIC for incorporation in ministries of the districts and local
28 churches, and continuously transforms itself to adapt to the challenges and opportunities for
29 ministry in the NIC.
30

31 **Diversity and Advocacy.** Diversity and advocacy for the role and priorities of groups who are
32 often underrepresented are important means to the end of pursuing the ministry of the NIC
33 which includes, nurtures and seeks justice for all in the name of Jesus Christ.
34 With respect to racial and cultural diversity, the ACST will have three membership positions for
35 representatives of ethnic caucuses. Currently, the NIC recognizes The Fellowship of Asian-
36 Americans, Black Methodists for Church Renewal and El Concilio.
37

38 With respect to all aspects of diversity, the structure will rely heavily on the Committee on
39 Nominations to create a pipeline of leaders from all of the diverse communities in the NIC to
40 feed into leadership roles across the conference, including the DSTs and the ACST.
41

42 Together, the structure itself and the intentional, prayerful nomination and leadership selection
43 process for all membership positions in the structure are meant to ensure diversity and
44 advocacy. Beginning in 2019, the entire structure and its implementation will be subject to
45 formal evaluation. The structure’s effectiveness in achieving diversity and advocacy goals will
46 be expressly subject to such evaluation.
47

1 **Adaptation.** The proposed organizational structure represents a step on the journey that began
2 with the Landscape Survey in 2015. The structure is expected to adapt over time.

3
4 **Further Organizational Tasks.** The proposed organizational structure is an overarching
5 structure for the equipping, coordinating and communicating functions essential to the NIC.
6 The underlying committee structure remains disjointed and duplicative. The Organizational
7 Task Force will be reformulated and will evaluate the existing committees and propose a
8 streamlined committee structure, as well as appropriate adaptations to the ACST and DSTs, to
9 the Annual Conference in 2018.

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14 **Document: 700.15**

15 **Title: Set the Prisoner and the Oppressed Free!**

16 **Author(s): Janice Gintzler, member of Hazel Crest Community UMC.**

17 **CCFA Comment:**

18
19 **ACTION:**

20 Close to the heart of Jesus was what is recorded in Luke 4:18:

21
22 *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has*
23 *sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed*
24 *free.” Luke 4:18*

25
26 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church is urged to address the
27 preponderance of people of color in the Cook County Jail that is situated on Clark Street at Van
28 Buren in Chicago. The Conference will add its name to the list of co-endorsers of The Principles
29 of Bail Reform in Cook County:

30 **Principles of Bail Reform in Cook County**

31
32 The pretrial detention system in Cook County needs reform. Cook County Jail incarcerates
33 approximately 7,500 people per day. An additional 2,000 people are under the Sheriff’s
34 supervision through electronic monitoring. More than 90% of the people detained are pretrial
35 and thus presumed innocent – a considerably higher rate than the national rate of 67%.
36 Approximately two thirds of unconvicted people incarcerated or on electronic monitoring in
37 Cook County would be free if they could afford to pay a monetary bond.

38
39 The overuse of pretrial incarceration and monitoring comes at tremendous personal cost to
40 impacted individuals and entire communities. Pretrial detention leads to lost jobs, lost housing,
41 and even lost custody of children. In addition, people detained pretrial are more likely to be
42 convicted. They also receive longer sentences compared to people released pretrial with similar
43 backgrounds and charges. African Americans receive disproportionately high monetary bonds
44 and are disproportionately unable to pay these bonds. Seventy-three percent of the people
45 incarcerated in the Cook County Jail are African American despite the fact that African
46 Americans make up only 25% of Cook County’s population. The twenty-seven percent who are
47 non-African Americans are also low income working people who suffer from detentions.

1
2 Recent history has shown that the population of Cook County Jail can be decreased
3 substantially with no impact on public safety or court appearance rates. The following six
4 principles provide guidance for reform efforts designed to reduce the number of people
5 incarcerated pretrial in Cook County Jail.
6

- 7 1. Pretrial detention and other restrictions on liberty should be used only as a last resort to
8 ensure community safety and the defendant's appearance in court due to previous
9 failure to appear.
10
- 11 2. Access to money should not determine whether or not an accused person is detained in
12 jail or subject to other conditions pending trial.
13
- 14 3. Pretrial services programs should be used to promote court attendance and provide
15 needed services and not place unnecessary conditions on the accused person.
16
- 17 4. Conditions of bail should not prevent an accused person from performing basic personal
18 responsibilities, impose direct or indirect economic costs, or unduly expose the accused
19 person to new criminal charges.
20
- 21 5. Data on detention and release outcomes should be collected and made available for
22 public review and system assessment purposes. Risk assessments, if used, must be
23 validated, transparent, and their impact must be tracked.
24
- 25 6. Administrative reforms should be made to ensure court practices conform to the law.
26 Judges should receive education and training consistent with existing law and these
27 principles.
28

29 The prison ministry at the Unitarian Church of Hyde Park, led by Evan Freund and with the help of The
30 People's Lobby and the Community Renewal Society had HB3421 introduced on March 31, 2017 into the
31 Illinois General Assembly.
32

33 Some of the organizations already endorsing the Principles are

34 A Just Harvest

35 Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice

36 Chicago Community Bond Fund

37 Chicago Council of Lawyers

38 The Sargent Shriver National Center of Poverty Law
39

40 **RATIONALE:**

41 The current bail system in Illinois is broken. In the overcrowded Cook County Jail alone, there
42 are more than 7,000 inmates on an average day. 95% of those admitted to the jail are pretrial
43 detainees, mostly there because they cannot afford bail. Over 4,400 people in Cook County Jail
44 at any given time are there because they are poor.
45

46 Let us live our faith and endorse the Principles.
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Document: 702.01
Name: Change Date Due for Legislation and Historical Reports
Author: Rev. Katie Voigt, Chair of Daily Proceedings
CCFA Comment:

ACTION:

The Northern Illinois Annual Conference shall amend the Standing Rules I.C.1. in the following ways:

All Historical Reports (400 and 500 series documents), including all financial matters pertaining thereto, for the previous calendar/conference year, are to be in the hands of the Chair of Daily Procedure in whatever format specified by her/him, no later than ~~March 1~~ April 1 immediately preceding the called session of annual conference...

Resolutions regarding Standing Rules and By-Laws are to be submitted by the ~~March 1st~~ April 1st deadline.

RATIONALE:

This change reflects the actual practice that has been used in the annual conference for the last number of years.